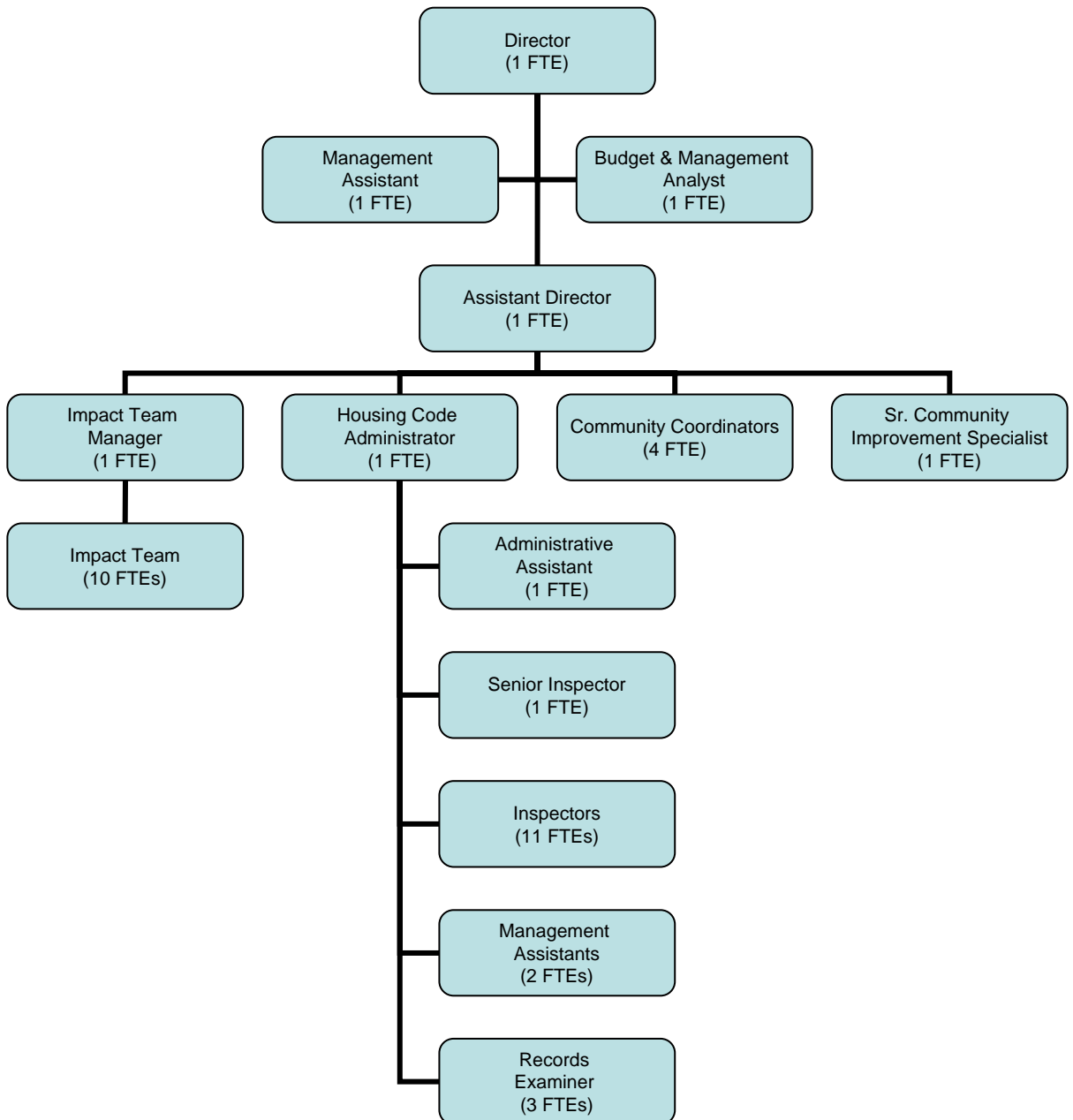




# Neighborhood Improvement Services

(39 FTEs)



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## NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT SERVICES

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**Mission:**

The Department of Neighborhood Improvement Services is dedicated to improving the quality of life for Durham's residents by increasing access to safe livable housing and by improving the City's physical environment.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

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**Neighborhood Improvement Services****Non-Grant Funds: \$2,673,907****30 FTEs****Grant Funds: \$516,300****9 FTEs****Administration**

Administration includes the oversight provided through the Office of the Director, and the ongoing administrative and managerial functions that are required for daily operations of the department, including: fiscal, financial and program management; personnel administration and development; customer service and strategic planning, and process improvement and performance reporting.

**Community Improvement Services- Code Enforcement Team**

The priority of code enforcement is the day to day management and implementation of all quality of life activities governed by minimum housing code, weedy lot, abandoned vehicle, junk, and debris ordinances.

**Community Improvement Services- Impact Team**

The Impact Team Division assists in the City Council's goals of ensuring that citizens enjoy a city rich in aesthetic beauty with a healthy environment and sustainable, thriving neighborhoods. The primary focus is to clean up City-owned properties, remove illegal dumpsites, illegal set outs, and graffiti removal. The Mayor's Summer Youth Works Summer Program encompasses employment of youth crews to pick up litter and other debris.

**Community Relations Coordination Services**

The program includes planning and implementation of neighborhood services and public education/community outreach programs to support neighborhoods and the facilitation of open communication and interface between city staff and the community. This group assists with neighborhood organizing, community education, and assisting District PACs in community service efforts.

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**RESOURCE ALLOCATION**

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|                           | Actual*    | Adopted*   | Estimated    | Adopted      | Change |
|---------------------------|------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------|
|                           | FY 2005-06 | FY 2006-07 | FY 2006-07   | FY 2007-08   |        |
| <i>Non-Grant</i>          |            |            |              |              |        |
| Appropriations            |            |            |              |              |        |
| Personal Services         | \$ -       | \$ -       | \$ 1,262,436 | \$ 1,585,224 | 100.0% |
| Operating                 | -          | -          | 538,850      | 1,076,683    | 100.0% |
| Capital                   | -          | -          | -            | -            | 0.0%   |
| Subtotal Appropriations   | \$ -       | \$ -       | \$ 1,801,286 | \$ 2,661,907 | 100.0% |
| Nondepartmental           |            |            |              |              |        |
| North East Central Durham | \$ -       | \$ -       | \$ -         | \$ 12,000    | 100.0% |
| Total Appropriations      | \$ -       | \$ -       | \$ 1,801,286 | \$ 2,673,907 | 100.0% |
| Full Time Equivalents     | -          | -          | 28           | 30           | 2      |
| Part Time                 | -          | -          | -            | -            | -      |
| Revenues                  |            |            |              |              |        |
| Discretionary             | \$ -       | \$ -       | \$ 1,801,286 | \$ 2,673,907 | 100.0% |
| Program                   | -          | -          | -            | -            | 0.0%   |
| Total Revenues            | \$ -       | \$ -       | \$ 1,801,286 | \$ 2,673,907 | 100.0% |
| <i>Grants</i>             |            |            |              |              |        |
| Appropriations            |            |            |              |              |        |
| Personal Services         | \$ -       | \$ -       | \$ 557,000   | \$ 501,300   | 100.0% |
| Operating                 | -          | -          | -            | 15,000       | 100.0% |
| Total Appropriations      | \$ -       | \$ -       | \$ 557,000   | \$ 516,300   | 100.0% |
| Full Time Equivalents     | -          | -          | 11           | 9            | -2     |
| Part Time                 | -          | -          | -            | -            | -      |
| Revenues                  |            |            |              |              |        |
| CDBG                      | \$ -       | \$ -       | \$ 557,000   | \$ 501,300   | 100.0% |
| Emergency Shelter         | -          | -          | -            | 15,000       | 100.0% |
| Total Revenues            | \$ -       | \$ -       | \$ 557,000   | \$ 516,300   | 100.0% |
| Total Budget              | \$ -       | \$ -       | \$ 2,358,286 | \$ 3,178,207 | 100.0% |

\*The Actual FY05-06 & Adopted FY06-07 columns are blank because Neighborhood Improvement Services is a new department that was created due to a split from the former Housing Department. The Estimated FY06-07 & Proposed FY07-08 columns represent post-split budget figures.

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**BUDGET ISSUES FOR FY 2007-08**

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- Relocate during FY08 due to the sale of current location at Heritage Square Shopping Center.
- Code enforcement division is not funded at the level necessary to meet enforcement compliance needs for the city.
- Relocation funding for low-income and disabled individuals and families as a result of code enforcement activities.

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**UNFUNDED OR UNDERFUNDED ITEMS**

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|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| • Code Enforcement – funding for demolition, weedy lots, and tipping fees         | \$842,475 |
| • Technology enhancement and 6 month transition contract with SoftDesign software | \$38,031  |
| • Rental inspection and exterior inspection of commercial properties              | \$274,384 |
| • Assistant Director Position, currently frozen                                   | \$80,039  |
| • Reservationist Position   | \$33,310  |

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**COMPLETED DEPARTMENT INITIATIVES FOR FY 2006-07**

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- Unsafe and dilapidated housing structures were removed from neighborhoods using the Minimum Housing Code Unsafe Building and Housing Appeal Board Processes.
- The number of unsafe and dilapidated houses removed citywide increased by 12% over 2006; 53% of these structures were voluntarily removed by the owner.
- Continued concentrated housing code enforcement efforts in conjunction with Department of Community Development to rehabilitate houses in targeted neighborhoods and relocation activities in order to comprehensively address housing needs and to promote neighborhood stability and private investment.
- Coordinated redevelopment strategies with the Department of Community Development in the South West Central Durham, St. Theresa, Ivy Commons, Stewart Heights and Walltown neighborhoods.
- Partnered with citizens to establish and/or strengthen 13 neighborhood associations; supported District PACs and attended meetings; coordinated neighborhood clean-ups; participated in quality of life initiatives including the Landlord Training Committee, Senior and Law Enforcement Together, Inter-PAC Environmental Justice Committee, City-wide Truancy Committee, Silver Arts for Senior Games, South West Central Durham Quality of Life Committee, EastEnd Connector; established Landon Street and Benning Street neighborhood watches; and assisted in establishing NECD leadership Committee.
- Using Emergency Shelter Grant Funds prevented the homelessness of eight citizens.
- Developed and completed the Citizen's Education Academy Manual as a resource guide to incorporate into the Citizen's Education Academy.
- Developed Landlord Training Manual in conjunction with Human Relations, Police and Solid Waste departments.
- Developed proactive public/private partnerships with South West Central Durham's Quality of Life Council, combining resources and activities to produce visual results in concentrated areas.
- Worked in conjunction with Durham One Call to improve handling, solving and reporting results on complaints, inquiries and citizens concerns.
- Developed standard operating policies and procedures for all program functions and computerized workflow, forms and reporting.
- Established an administrative fee charged to noncompliant property owners (not applied to primary residents).

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**DEPARTMENT INITIATIVES FOR FY 2007-08**

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- Expand code enforcement efforts to address the removal of trash and debris from commercial properties.
- Establish Rental Inspection Program to create a healthy, safe, and crime-free environment, and to preserve and enhance the quality of life for residents of the City living in residential rental units.
- Establish Targeted Neighborhood Revitalization Program – to address vacant/boarded/abandoned properties.
- Continue Landlord and Tenant Training Program in conjunction with the Police, Solid Waste and Human Relations Departments.
- Hold bi-weekly CENAT community assessments for housing code enforcement, zoning, animal control, fire and police, and solid waste issues.
- Sponsor Great American Neighborhood Spring Clean Ups.
- Support Mayor's Summer Youth Program to provide youth positive and responsible work opportunity to build strong and responsible citizens.
- Implement Education and Public Awareness Campaign on the minimum housing code and other community issues.
- Implement partnerships with community businesses to assist with the neighborhood revitalization efforts.

- Implement Work Order process for integrating Impact Team response to weeded lots/board and clean complaints.
- Implement standard operation procedures and policies in place for new department.
- Provide staff internal and external training opportunities on new organizational system and procedures.

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**GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES FOR FY 2007-08**

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**GOAL:** *To reduce the number of substandard housing and unsafe structures in the City of Durham.*

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**OBJECTIVE:** To demolish unsafe residential and commercial structures located in the City of Durham.

**OBJECTIVE:** To aggressively enforce the Minimum Housing Code and Unsafe Building Ordinance.

**OBJECTIVE:** To increase the number of cases presented to the Housing Appeals Board and Community Life Court.

**OBJECTIVE:** To enforce the orders of the Housing Appeals Board and Community Life Court.

**STRATEGY:** Enforce the Minimum Housing Code and Unsafe Building Ordinance legal process on the structures identified as vacant/abandoned by citizen volunteers.

**STRATEGY:** Work with other city and county departments to proactively identify and eliminate code violations by sending Code Enforcement Teams out to canvass inner-city neighborhoods.

**STRATEGY:** Eliminate the number of open cases by following through with approved procedures and filling vacant housing inspector positions.

| <b>MEASURE:</b>                                  | <b>Actual<br/>FY 2006</b> | <b>Adopted<br/>FY 2007</b> | <b>Estimated<br/>FY 2007</b> | <b>Adopted<br/>FY 2008</b> |
|--|---------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| # Substandard structures inspected               | 862                       | 1,272                      | 2,228                        | 2,244                      |
| % Substandard structures brought into compliance | 62%                       | 70%                        | 61%                          | 65%                        |

**GOAL:** *To decrease the number of abandoned, junked and hazardous vehicles located in the City of Durham.*

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**OBJECTIVE:** To aggressively enforce the Abandoned, Junk and Hazardous Vehicle Ordinance.

**STRATEGY:** Develop a training program for new and existing housing inspectors which identifies applicable North Carolina General Statutes and the City processes for abatement.

**STRATEGY:** Work with other city departments to proactively identify and eliminate abandoned, junk and hazardous vehicles by sending Code Enforcement Teams out to canvass inner-city neighborhoods.

**STRATEGY:** Forward cases to Community Life Court that cannot be abated through self-help remedy.

| <b>MEASURE:</b>                                     | <b>Actual<br/>FY 2006</b> | <b>Adopted<br/>FY 2007</b> | <b>Estimated<br/>FY 2007</b> | <b>Adopted<br/>FY 2008</b> |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| # Vehicles inspected                                | 1,272                     | 1,295                      | 1,284                        | 1,416                      |
| % Vehicles brought into compliance within 12 months | N/A                       | N/A                        | N/A                          | 98%                        |

**GOAL:** *To decrease the number of trash/debris/weedy lots in the City of Durham.*

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**OBJECTIVE:** To aggressively enforce the ordinance that addresses trash and undergrowth on property.

**STRATEGY:** Work with other city departments to proactively identify and eliminate junk and weedy lots by sending Code Enforcement Teams out to canvass inner-city neighborhoods.

**STRATEGY:** Forward cases to Community Life Court that cannot be abated through self-help remedy.

**STRATEGY:** Aggressively enforce the ordinance in order to reduce the number of repeat violators.

| <b>MEASURE:</b>                                       | <b>Actual<br/>FY 2006</b> | <b>Adopted<br/>FY 2007</b> | <b>Estimated<br/>FY 2007</b> | <b>Adopted<br/>FY 2008</b> |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| # Weedy lot inspections                               | 1,161                     | 1,878                      | 1,828                        | 1,946                      |
| % Weedy lots brought into compliance within 12 months | N/A                       | N/A                        | N/A                          | 50%                        |

**GOAL:** *To decrease the number of individuals residing in sub-standard dwellings.*

**OBJECTIVE:** To place citizens in safe, decent and affordable rental dwellings by utilizing the relocation program.

**STRATEGY:** Work in conjunction with the Housing Inspectors to relocate occupants out of structures that have been condemned.

**STRATEGY:** Work with the Community Relations Coordinators, neighborhood organizations and PACs to identify dwellings in their districts that have major Minimum Housing Code violations.

| <b>MEASURE:</b> | <b>Actual<br/>FY 2006</b> | <b>Adopted<br/>FY 2007</b> | <b>Estimated<br/>FY 2007</b> | <b>Adopted<br/>FY 2008</b> |
|-----------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| # Relocations   | 10                        | 10                         | 12                           | 10                         |

**GOAL:** *Durham citizens enjoy a City rich in aesthetic beauty.*

**OBJECTIVE:** To support strategies designed to strengthen the City's partnership with community groups to combat litter.

**STRATEGY:** Focus on strategies that target illegal dump removal, graffiti eradication, and weed abatement.

| <b>MEASURE:</b>                            | <b>Actual<br/>FY 2006</b> | <b>Adopted<br/>FY 2007</b> | <b>Estimated<br/>FY 2007</b> | <b>Adopted<br/>FY 2008</b> |
|--|---------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| # Illegal dumps removed                    | 1105                      | 900                        | 828                          | 869                        |
| % Illegal dumps removed within 48 hours    | N/A                       | N/A                        | N/A                          | 95%                        |
| # Illegal set-outs removed                 | 7,054                     | N/A                        | 8,604                        | 9,034                      |
| % Illegal set-outs removed within 48 hours | N/A                       | N/A                        | N/A                          | 95%                        |
| # Graffiti eradications                    | 1,163                     | 175                        | 540                          | 600                        |
| % Graffiti removed within 24 hours         | N/A                       | N/A                        | N/A                          | 95%                        |
| # Grocery carts returned to owner          | 2,622                     | 1,700                      | 3,190                        | 3,350                      |
| % Shopping carts returned within 48 hours  | N/A                       | N/A                        | N/A                          | 95%                        |

**OBJECTIVE:** To encourage neighborhood revitalization and restoration.

**STRATEGY:** Focus on strategies that encourage restoration and reinvestment in Durham neighborhoods.

|   | <b>Actual<br/>FY 2006</b> | <b>Adopted<br/>FY 2007</b> | <b>Estimated<br/>FY 2007</b> | <b>Adopted<br/>FY 2008</b> |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>MEASURE:</b>   |                           |                            |                              |                            |
| Value of renovation/rehab driven<br>by housing code permits | N/A                       | N/A                        | \$446,210                    | \$500,000                  |
| Value of new construction driven<br>by code enforcement     | N/A                       | N/A                        | \$2,298,558                  | \$1,000,000                |